

CBS SATURDAY EVENING NEWS
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Suspected Israeli Spying

SCHIEFFENT: Navy intelligence analyst Jonathan Pollard pleaded guilty this week to espionage charges, but the case is far from closed. He sold U. S. secrets to a group of Israelis. That is raising questions about U. S. relations with a close ally, while, on another front, intelligence officials are pondering how to prosecute the growing number of spy cases without giving too many secrets away.

Our reports begin with Bill Redeker in Tel Aviv.

BILL REDEKER: Implications that the Israelis had ambitiously spied on the United States may threaten to undermine years of bilateral trust, years of a unique relationship. When the Commandant of the U. S. Marines arrived here this week, he was warmly welcomed by Israel's chief of staff, a ceremonial reminder that Israel is America's most important Middle East ally, an ally the United States supports with nearly \$4 billion a year.

So when it was reported that Pollard had named four Israelis as spies, it came as no surprise when the government here quickly put up a wall of silence. The cabinet refused to comment; the Prime Minister did the same, leaving only the Minister of Justice to offer this unofficial justification.

YITZHAK MORDAI: It did not happen in order to supply secret information to the United States' enemies. It was for Israel to be able to use it against its enemies, some of which are our common enemies.

REDEKER: Among the four Israelis accused in the case are Rafael Etan, a veteran of

Israel's shadowy secret service, and Aviam Sella, an Air Force colonel considered one of Israel's brightest young officers. The head of Israeli military intelligence said the revelations had badly hurt this country's intelligence community, but denied the military was involved, despite allegations against the colonel.

All of which raises yet another embarrassing question the Israelis also refuse to answer; namely, who is in charge of Israel's intelligence services. If the intelligence chief didn't know an Air Force officer was spying, who did?

So far authorities have revealed little and said even less, apparently hoping the controversy will die so that the unique relationship will survive.

Bill Redeker, CBS News, Tel Aviv.

RITA BRAVER: Jonathan Pollard pleaded guilty this week to spying for Israel. Ronald Pelton was convicted of selling top secrets to Russia. There are just two of 27 individuals arrested for spying in the last 2 1/2 years. And high profile court proceedings have brought intense scrutiny not just to the spies, but to the secrets they gave away.

Ten years ago, the government was so afraid of courtroom intelligence breaches that many spies went free. This man helped convince the intelligence community that spies could be prosecuted.

John Martin, chief of the Justice Department's Internal Security Section, was named as the Attorney General's top employee of the year. He says trying spy cases requires a

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delicate sense of balance.

JOHN MARTIN: It's very much like a disease and where a surgeon has to perform some kind of procedure in order to correct the problem. You see some blood; you will have scars, but you hope the patient will live.

BRAVER: The operations are not all successful.

For example, two cases involving alleged spying for the Soviets. Richard Craig Smith was acquitted. Richard Miller's first trial ended in a hung jury, and he's being retried. But there are more successes, like the plea agreement that resulted in master spy John Walker becoming a government witness. And John Martin says the cases have another purpose.

MARTIN: We have to send messages to our adversaries to the effect that we will not tolerate this kind of hostile activity within the United States against our national security interests.

BRAVER: Justice Department officials say that every time a spy goes to jail, it sends a message to potential spies who think they might get away with espionage.

Rita Braver, CBS News, Washington.

SCHIEFFER: Former CIA Director Stansfield Turner said today the outbreak of spying has come about because the nature of intelligence gathering has changed.

He spoke in an interview this afternoon.

Admiral Turner, when we talk about 27 spies in two years, that's a staggering number. Are there any secrets left?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Yes, there are, Bob. But unfortunately, we're reaching an age when we have so much technical intelligence collection, with satellites, with electronic

listening systems and such, that there have to be an awful lot of people in the system who invent, build, operate and maintain those systems. Thus there're an awful lot of people the Soviets can try to suborn.

Unfortunately too, people don't look on a satellite or an electronic device with the same sanctity that they do a human life in the old world of human spying.

SCHIEFFER: How much damage has been done by all of these disclosures?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, there's no way that you and I can really estimate that, Bob, because we just don't have enough secrets to tell. We don't know how quickly the CIA can reconstitute the kind of information that they were getting and that maybe has been lost. We don't know how much of this information the Soviets knew any way.

SCHIEFFER: It would seem to be a difficult decision to decide whether to prosecute someone in a spy case for fear of having to disclose more information. That makes me wonder. Twenty-seven spies in two years. Did we always have this many people spying, or is it suddenly the government is prosecuting these people and deciding to go into court with them?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, we reversed that policy during the Carter administration and prosecuted all of the known spies that we found during that time. In four of those cases, we had to make the same kind of difficult decisions that the administration has made in the Pelton case recently. That is, what would we release in order to get a conviction?

It was tough each time, but we did it.

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SCHIEFFER: What kind of information is getting out that is harmful, Admiral?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, what gets out that you really want in is how you collect information. What you do can be compromised if the other side knows quite precisely how you do it. In this instance, there are reports in the press that the Soviets picked up a piece of equipment that we use for monitoring electronic signals. Once they have that equipment in their hands, it's a lot easier for them to deny us the use of that equipment.